

FREMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN

28 FEBRUARY 2008

APPROVED 03/06/2007

The Board's meeting was called to order at 6:13 pm by Gene Cordes. Present were Selectmen Gene Cordes and Peter Bolduc; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson; Dan DiTullio from Waste Management and Paul Mercier from the Mercier Group.

Selectmen began the meeting at 6:15 pm with Paul Mercier to discuss the 2007 Audit. Cordes indicated the Board wanted to meet with Mercier in follow-up to recent reports of some things going on in other communities.

Mercier said that in many small communities it is difficult to separate out duties among officers if a few people are expected to do many different tasks. In particular to the Newmarket matter, Mercier did not discuss any personnel issues, but said that no one had talked to him about the matters reported in the news.

His understanding of the situation in Newmarket was that someone looked at 3,000 transactions and pulled some five or so, totaling \$35,000 that were further questioned. The Town had an internal control system in place, and that particular transactions had gone through that system. There was then reportedly further investigation by some group or individuals in the community, questioning whether or not the transactions were legitimate.

Mercier said that in the grand scheme of things, nothing was disclosed that was not normal operating procedures in small communities.

Cordes questioned if Mercier reviews things like software for its use. He said he did, and does make recommendations on potential areas for improvement. Cordes questioned the type of things he reviews and asked if information is compared/reviewed in accordance with DRA guidelines and such. Mercier indicated that is the case. He indicated Fremont meets those guidelines and expectations.

He said that there are many local officials involved and that he provides a level of expertise to pull it all together.

Selectmen indicated that they are particularly looking for a level of objectivity as well, in terms of following procedures and things "tying out" and that there are no major flaws in the system.

Mercier added that in Fremont, he does not feel we are doing a bad job. He talked about how the Board of Selectmen is quite involved, and the office staff is experienced. There will obviously be some new changes this year, particularly in that we have a new Tax Collector after a long-term person in the position.

Selectmen explained that they wanted to meet with Mercier to be pro-active and gain an understanding of where he is at, and the Town overall in this regard.

Selectmen questioned that if Mercier had identified any problems, would he come forward and let the Board know? Mercier indicated absolutely.

Mercier said this Board is more involved than many. He indicated the Selectmen obviously look at more of the detail of the transactions, approve contracts, and the like. Mercier said this means the Board has a good "street sense" of what is going on in Town.

Cordes said that the Board members individually look over the manifests and ask questions on whatever they do not know about or have not seen.

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Mercier said that things overall in Fremont are going well. There are things that are updated year to year.

Mercier added that with a small organization, you rely on your external audit firm for the questions that pop up during the year. He said he would offer an opinion but would not render a decision so as to maintain his independence from the Town, and his objectivity.

There was discussion about updating practices and procedures regarding personnel and skills; and how things upgrade over time.

Selectmen asked Mercier if he saw anything that needed the Board's attention, to be sure that he contacted them.

There was discussion about the budgetary layer of reporting and the consolidation and conversion to an accrual basis which brings in the fixed asset portion of the financial statements. There was some discussion about insurance on deposited funds and changes to laws in that regard.

The Board thanked Mercier for his time and he left the meeting at 6:50 pm.

Selectmen read through the minutes from last week.

At 7:00 pm there were no Department Heads present.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the minutes for 21 February 2008. Motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Cordes to approve them as written. The vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

2. Selectmen re-signed the abatement form (with typographical errors corrected) from last week on parcel 06-062.012.009. This was provided to the Tax Collector

3. Selectmen walked through each of the warrant articles for the Saturday Town Meeting session and discussed them in terms of what other supplemental information may be needed.

4. There was some follow-up discussion on a question posed to Cordes by Matthew Thomas regarding the Board's not making a recommendation in the warrant on the SB2 article. Selectmen discussed this briefly, and Cordes will make a follow-up call to Thomas.

5. Carlson updated the Board on the status of Rislove's Way. Carlson met with some representatives of the homeowner's association this week and discussed the status of the road, which has had the final coat of paving, but shoulder work was apparently done in January. There is a letter of credit in place, due to be renewed for the project, but the road is not on the warrant for acceptance at the 2008 Town Meeting because the proper procedures have not yet been completed.

6. Selectmen briefly discussed the draft Wage Study and want it as an agenda item again next week.

At 7:30 pm Selectmen publicly opened the three trash/recycling bids that had been received.

This included proposals as follows:

BestWay Disposal: \$198,000 with the fixed price for each year thereafter to be based on a 5% annual increase. Three year base bid with a two year mutually agreeable option. In the body of the introduction

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letter (not on the proposal form) it discusses an additional fuel surcharge of the difference per gallon over \$4.00 on a monthly basis, calculated using a rolling daily average of the prior month.

Pinard Waste Systems: \$289,000 for five years with the fixed price for each year after the first to be based on CIP Northeastern Wage Earners December index; # of homes receiving weekly MSW service; # of homes receiving weekly recycling services based on increases in the participation rate at \$1.85 per week per unit.

Options are discussed to include within 180 days of the start date of the contract, Pinard providing two 65 gallon toters equipped with lids and large wheels for easy maneuverability. One cart would be for MSW to be hauled to Turnkey in Rochester. The second cart would be for residents wishing to participate in "single stream recycling" offered by Pinard.

The proposal has an increase of \$90 per year per new participant for increases in recycling.

Waste Management of NH: Submitted three separate proposals including:

\$221,200 for curbside collection of MSW and recycling per RFP for a five year fixed price.

\$208,800 for the same with a fuel adjustment based on the increase or decrease of diesel fuel cost as measured by the US Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration for the NE region from the established baseline of \$3.55 per gallon including taxes.

\$205,500 for the same with a fuel adjustment and use of a 64-gallon cart collection process. Under this proposal, WM would provide one cart to each household and that would be put out each week with MSW and the regular recycling bin. WM has found that the total amount of solid waste will be reduced and recycling increased by this method, thus reducing the Town's overall MSW tipping fees.

Each of the options has a fixed 5% annual increase.

None of the proposals are the same, at face value, and there is a lot to be compiled to make the comparisons between them, and the requirements set forth by the Town in the RFP.

Selectmen made no decision, and took copies of the proposals to review individually prior to the meeting next week.

A spreadsheet of information will be compiled and made a part of the minutes once completed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Selectmen reviewed the accounts payable manifest in the amount of \$231,851.31 dated 02/28/08.

With no questions, motion was made to approve it by Bolduc. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

2. Selectmen reviewed an Intent to Cut for 2007-08 on parcel 01-005 owned by Nancy and Lawrence Lourette. Bolduc moved to approve this Intent. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

3. Selectmen reviewed and signed outgoing correspondence to Scott Boisvert re: resignation from the Fremont Planning Board.

4. Selectmen reviewed the folder of incoming correspondence.

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5. Selectmen reviewed a long-term agreement with NH LGC PLT for property liability and other insurances. The Board asked Carlson to further investigate the 9-9-9 program and its quoted offerings with someone from the Trust, and get back to the Board next week with more information.

6. Selectmen reviewed and signed a memorandum to the Cable Committee to let them know the Board continues to work on the contract being finalized and set aside time on next week's agenda at 7:30 pm to further review and discuss it. A copy of the email from Peter Bearse to some members of the Cable Committee was also copied and will be sent out with it. The email did not show this had been sent to all members, so it was mailed with the Board's memo just in case. A copy of all the franchise-related costs (as prepared by Jay Somers) was also sent along with the mailing.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

At 8:50 pm motion was made by Bolduc to enter non-public session pursuant to NH RSA 91-A:3 II (c) to discuss tax hardship matters. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

At 9:15 pm motion was made by Bolduc to return to public session. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

Selectmen indicated that they had reviewed the successful evaluation and recommended a step raise for full-time highway worker Leon Holmes Jr based on a that evaluation for the preceeding year. Motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Cordes to approve a step raise for Leon Holmes Jr. The vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

Selectmen reviewed the three hardship letters and will act on each one separately next week once response letters have been drafted.

NEXT WEEK

The next regular Board meeting will be held on Thursday March 6, 2008 at 6:00 pm.

With no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Bolduc and seconded by Cordes to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 pm. The vote was unanimously approved 2-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator